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#91
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THE HEROINE ADDICT #9, Spring, 1976. Published quarterly by The Adventure Heroines Publishing Association, *the production division of The Comics Heroines Fan Club.* *All contents copyright 1976 by Albert Tanner unless otherwise indicated. Artwork includes original illustrations of characters copyrighted by National Periodical Publications, The Marvel Comics Group, and Charlton Publications. Views expressed by THA contributors do not necessarily represent the attitudes or policies of the publishing organization. All material submitted for potential publication becomes the property of the publisher unless otherwise arranged by mutual agreement. The prices of separate THA issues may vary with lengths and production costs.*

Except where otherwise stated, all correspondence should be mailed to:

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Baltimore, Md. 21234

MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscribing members of The Comics Heroines Fan Club receive all subscription material produced by the AHPA, including *THE ADVENTURESS* fiction issues and special publications, at club rates as announced.

Our publishing, mailing, and general operating costs are met through subscription payments, minimal charges to advertisers, and the sale of original artwork and other special-order material. Each member's account is being charged $1.10 for this THA issue. (Overseas charges: 80 pence by air mail or 60 pence by surface mail.) Newcomers may send a payment of $3.30 or more to become subscribers or order a single copy for $1.25. All checks *must* be made *payable* to A.S. Turner, our business manager.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Most of our material is produced on an assignment basis by AHPA staff writers and artists, but we are always glad to receive inquiries from potential new contributors. They should send summaries of their ideas and/or samples of their work. I will reply as promptly as possible with an evaluation and, if applicable, detailed information on our publishing policies, technical requirements, and organizational procedures.

Naturally we cannot guarantee to publish any unsolicited material, and we cannot return any contributions unless accompanied by self-addressed stamped return envelopes of sufficient size. -A.T.

Letters to the editor are welcome!

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Larry Heller — *Scott Taylor*
Wes Smith — *Frank Travellin, Jr.*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

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Ted Delorme: pages 28-29
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Chris Padovano: pages 12, 13
Bob Rodi: pages 24, 25, 36
Wes Smith: pages 2↑, 2→
Carol Strickland: pages 2↓, 3, 5, 6, 7
Scott Taylor: pages 11, 38
Mercy Van Vlack: *cover*; pages 8-9, 10, 30↑, 34, 39

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If "PAYMENT NOW DUE" has been stamped on your THA envelope, your CHFC subscription either has expired or will expire with our next mailing. To avoid interruption in receiving all up-coming subscription mailings, renew your account now with a check for $4.40 or more made payable to our AHPA business manager, A.S. Turner.

Most members prefer to keep a larger balance in their accounts so they will have to send less-frequent payments. We keep an individual record of each member's account of course. Don't forget to renew; we cannot afford to mail you any extra reminders!

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defeating the elementals was a breeze!

BY jeff thompson

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language specifies a "zephyr" as "the west wind" or "a gentle breeze," and maintains that "Zephyrus" is "a [Greek] god personifying the gentle west wind." Zephyr, the exciting villainess-heroine seen in Marvel Comics' SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS #8—15 (August, 1974—October, 1975), seems to be an appealing combination of both. Zephyr is a goddess—in position and appearance—and she personifies the contempt and the gentility of the elusive winds which she controls.

Despite her small, unflattering appearance on only one SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS cover (Gil Kane's for #12), Zephyr figured prominently in the cosmic struggle between bizarre interpretations of good and evil: N'Kantu, The Living Mummy; and others versus the uncanny Elementals. Before proceeding any further, a proper introduction (or reintroduction) to the heroes, heroines, villains, and incidental characters in the SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS extravaganza is in order.

THE HEROES

1. N'KANTU (The Living Mummy), a centuries-old, once-African chieftain who was sadistically sentenced to a mummified living death by the Egyptian pharaoh, Nephrus.
2. Dr. ALEXI SKARAB, an Egyptologist and a descendent of Nephrus. Dr. Skarab and N'Kantu share a strange, ESP-like mental link.
3. RON McALLISTER, an anthropologist-colleague of Dr. Skarab's.
4. RICHARD "ASP" HARPER, a smalltime bandit whose involvement with the others proved to be a slightly mellowing experience.
5. PAUL OLDDAN, a "gentleman thief," an artist, and "Asp's" partner-in-peril.

THE HEROINES

1. ZEPHYR, a millenium-old Elemental. A tavern wench centuries upon centuries ago (cryptically mentioned in #9, 11, & 13), she is now the arcane mistress of the winds.
2. JANICE CARR, an anthropologist-colleague of Dr. Skarab's and Ron McAllister's girl friend.

3. RACHA MEYER, a courageous youn· woman warrior whom N'Kantu brfriended in the tenth issue.

THE VILLAINS

1. HYDRON, a millenium-old Elemental. The cruelest of the four Elementals, he is lord over water.
2. MAGNUM, the Elemental master of earth (soil, land).
3. HELLFIRE, the Elemental controller of flame.
4. THE LIVING PHARAOH, an Egyptian-style rogue who battled N'Kantu in #9. An old adversary of Havok and the X-Men, he appeared in THE X-MEN #54-58.

From the beginning, Zephyr exhibited characteristics which set her apart from the more ruthless men of the Elemental group. In SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS #8, Zephyr called N'Kantu "you poor, tortured man." The basis for the battle between the Living Mummy et al and the three Elementals was the mysterious, bug-shaped Ruby Scarab, a magically-forged bauble which, if in the Elementals' possession, would reassure their position of supremacy on Earth. Hydron and the others tempted N'Kantu into doing their bidding (they wanted him to secure the Scarab) by hinting that the power of the Ruby Scarab could restore his decomposed flesh and return him to a true life. It wasn't until Zephyr put a "soul-spell" on the Mummy, however, that N'Kantu was thought to comply:

> Zephyr is both Elemental fury and woman. As such, she knows many secrets. As woman, she knows how to reach a man's soul. As Elemental, she knows how to strip it bare, expose it to her winds of change and make that soul her own!

Despite her seizing of N'Kantu's soul and aiding her fellow Elementals (what was she expected to do?), traits of compassion ultimately showed through Zephyr's facade. In SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS #11, after she arrived in Cairo, Egypt, looking for the Mummy, she cast a charitable spell over some old, poverty-striken paupers. Later in the issue, when she found N'Kantu and saw that he had been severely burned, she healed him.

The powers which Zephyr displayed in her eight-issue run were various types of spells (#8, 9, & 11), healing ability (#11), and teleportation of herself (#10), as well as others (#11, 13, 14, & 15), by wind currents. Although the mistress of the winds employed all these capabilities, we read-ers are far from knowing everything about her—but will we ever have the chance to learn more?

The months-long Mummy saga in SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS came to a head and resolved in the final four issues (#12-15) in a story-within-a-saga entitled "The War That Shook the World!" It was at this point that Zephyr's humane qualities overruled her loyalty to Hydron, Hellfire, and Magnum and she betrayed them. She was immediately cap-

tured and placed in bondage for the entire twelfth issue; unfortunately, this was how she was pictured on her only cover. Joining her for a time in captivity were Richard "Aso" Harper and Paul Olddan, a pair of shady characters not hardened enough to withstand casting in their collective lot with N'Kantu, Dr. Skarab, Ron, Janice, and Zephyr. However, Hydron's energy bands which suspended the three in mid-air over Cairo were cancelled when Ron shot him. In the end, Ron, Janice, "Aso," and Olddan focused their collective mental prowess through the Ruby Scarab as well as N'Kantu, Dr. Skarab, and Zephyr and permanently ousted the spirits of the three Elementals from this dimension. But all was not well: the Ruby Scarab had been made powerless, thus unable to (perhaps) restore N'Kantu's body.

As previously stated, SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS writers Steve Gerber, Tony Isabella, Len Wein, and John Warner left many unanswered questions—most concerning Zephyr—when the Living Mummy's strip and the magazine hastily were cancelled with SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS #15 (October, 1975). For instance, what is the difference in abilities between Zephyr and Crystal, one of the Inhumans? Crystal is billed as an Elemental (like Zephyr) and Johnny Storm's ex-sweetheart has been known to conjure similar meteorological mayhem. And how do Zephyr and the newest X-Woman, Storm, relate to each other? Plus, is there any connection between Zephyr and the other Elementals and the Marvel character known simply as Mother Nature, seen in DOCTOR STRANGE #6-9? The total phenomena which the four Elementals control—wind currents, water and precipitation, fire, and earth—comprise those abilities traditionally bestowed upon the Mother Nature concept as well as the DOCTOR STRANGE character seen in Dormammu-Umar storyline. Occasionally such cases of mythological duality and seeming paradoxes crop up at Marvel, another example being Satan in GHOST RIDER and THE SON OF SATAN and Pluto and Mephisto in THOR and THE CHAMPIONS. This specific question was explained somewhat in the lettercol of THOR #227; that "armadillo," as the Marvel letter column writers are called, claimed that Mephisto and Satan, at least, are one and the same. Does this mean that Mother Nature and the Elementals—and maybe even Crystal and Storm—are manisfestations of the same being or concept?

Crystal, a.k.a. Mrs. Quicksilver, is certainly living and breathing, but are the Elementals flesh-and-blood or spirits? The quartet is millions of years old and each Elemental seems to be more of a personification of a meteorological occurrence than an actual person.

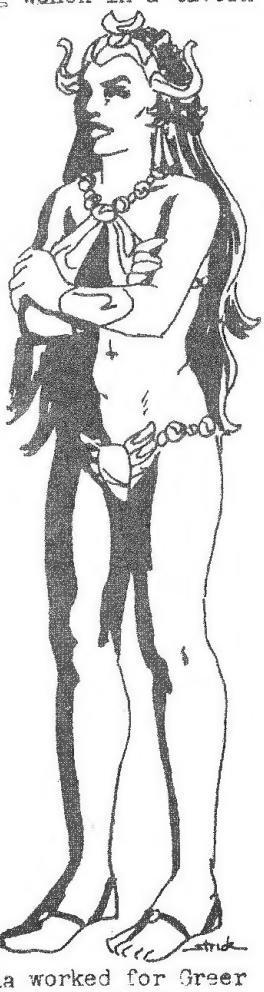
> Then, like a deathless breath of breeze, the mistress of the winds is gone from the castle-out-of-time, borne upon the gale that fills the void, back to Earth...[2]

Does this passage suggest science-fiction-like teleportation, astral projection, or a spirit?

On page fifteen of SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS, Zephyr hinted at growing in-

fatuation and feelings of empathy and symoathy in her for N'Kantu. She "sided with these humans," as Hydron put it, in order to help the Mummy in finding a way to return to a true life. Then, at the denouement of the world-shaking war, Zephyr joined "Aso" and Olddan in their travels, leaving the Mummy and the other behind! If she had as much feeling for N'Kantu as she claimed, why did she run off with Olddan and "Aso?"

On a less "heavy" note, Zephyr's past as a serving wench in a tavern (of which she was ashamed) was mentioned vaguely on several occasions. Since this part of her long life occurred before she acquired her Elemental powers—and she's been the wind mistress for centuries—could her heritage somehow be tied in with the Hyborian Age, chronicled in Marvel's best-selling CONAN THE BARBARIAN magazine? Or with Kull or Red Sonja? In my opinion, Zephyr is more suited to sword-and-sorcery and mystical adventures than those of a straight super-heroine, such as the Valkyrie or the Scarlet Witch. "Membership" in the Defenders is not for her!



I would greatly appreciate any letters of comment from you which I might have evoked by the conjectures of the last six paragraphs. I know of some devout Zephyr-lovers in comicdom; is your opinion of her similar or unfavorable?

SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS and its cast of characters have been absent for months now. SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS #15's lettercol made a promise that Len Wein would tie up any loose ends from the Living Mummy strip in an upcoming story in THE INCREDIBLE HULK magazine, but—for all of the fine things about Marvel—one bad point about the company is their frequent negligence of keeping promises (see "The Tigra Papers" in THE HEROINE ADDICT #7 and "A Second Look at 'The Tigra Papers'" next issue). My dictionary also calls a zephyr "a passing thing;" is this intriguing heroine Zephyr really "gone with the wind," as Bob Rodi feared in a letter in SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS #15? Marvel Comics' heroine roster has been shortened enough lately, what with Mantis' celestial departure and Thundra's seeming slide into oblivion. Tony "The Tiger" Isabella worked for Greer (Cat/Tigra) Nelson's re-debut and succeeded; can—or will—he do the same for Zephyr, another heroine whom he has scripted?

Write!

JEFF THOMPSON
6907 Pennywell Drive
Nashville, Tennessee
37205

1. SUPERNATURAL THRILLERS #8, p. 22. 2. #10, p. 14.

Heroine Hotline
THERE HAVE BEEN A LOT OF NEW HEROINES ON THE SCENE LATELY, (SEE COVER!), IN COMICS, REPRINT BOOKS, AS WELL AS A FEW GALS ON TV!
INEFFABLE EMMA! AS PLAYED BY DIANA RIGG, SHE'S TO RETURN AS THE AVENGERS GO INTO NEW ADVENTURES!
OUT OF THE 70+ RECENT HEROINES, VILLAINESSES, AND PART TIME GIRL FRIENDS, I'VE DECIDED TO "HOTLINE"...
COMING SOON! HANNA-BARBERA HAS BOUGHT THE TEEN TITANS, TO CARTOON FOR TV. WITH WONDER GIRL AND A RE-DESIGNED LILITH!
LOOKS LIKE YOU STEPPED IN SOME SCOOBY DOO!
SOR-REEE!
DC SUPER-STARS #2 WITH REPRINTS OF HAWKGIRL AND ALANNA TEAMED!
AND: HOW MARENE BECAME AN ATOMIC KNIGHT, WHILE ORA JOINS THE KNIGHTS OF THE GALAXY IN A DARING PLOY!
OUT OF LIMBO AND INTO ACTION MISS AMERICA AND The LIBERTY LEGION IN MARVEL PREMIERE #29!
BIG BARDA IS BACK! FIRST ISSUE SPECIAL #13 (DC) ON NEW GENESIS WITH HUSBAND SCOTT FREE AGAINST DARKSEID'S PARADEMONS!

SPACE 1999 #3 FROM CHARLTON PITS CORA AGAINST....
DR. HELENA RUSSEL
REGA
IN AN INTERPLANETARY ZOO!
and ZUN
all characters copyrighted to their respective companies ©1976
WILL EISNER HAS BEEN KNOWN FOR HIS FANTASTIC FEMALES, AND The SPIRIT #12 FROM the WARREN MAGAZINE PUBS, CO. IS NO EXCEPTION, WITH: ON YOUR LEFT, SAND SAREF, WHO SPENT A FEW WEEKS WITH THE SPIRIT IN SEARCH of THE JEWEL OF GIZEH. ON THE RIGHT, CROOKED LAWYER "SLIP" CLAWS, AND, ELLEN DOLAN, CENTER. THE SPIRIT'S STEADY GIRL, AND ONE OF THE FEW WHO DOESN'T TRY TO MURDER HIM ALLA TIME!
MARVEL PRESENTS (#4) The GUARDIANS of THE GALAXY AND ALETA / STARHAWK, A VERY MYSTERIOUS LADY. NIKKI FROM MERCURY JOINS THE GROUP THIS ISSUE ...
Hi, I'M NIKKI, AND DON'T YOU FORGET IT! MERCY GAVE ME THIS NUTTY COSTUME TO WEAR AS LONG AS I TELL YOU TO WATCH THE BIONIC WOMAN SERIES ON ABC-TV! FOR MORE INFO ON JAIME SOMMERS, (LINDSAY WAGNER) TAKE A LOOK AT KIRK HASTINGS ARTICLE IN THE HEROINE ADDICT #8, CHUM!
AND, THANKS TO AL TANNER AND KIRK HASTINGS FOR THE IDEA OF THIS NEW FORMAT - IT GIVES A GAL ROOM TO BREATHE!

CLUB NEWS!

And Other Pertinent Points → → → By Al Tanner, editor

Wow! Our planning is developing so fast and in so many directions that I can barely keep with up with all the developments at this point, much less report them to you in "Club News." I'm beginning to feel more like the ringmaster of a three-ring circus than an editor. Don't blame me if I hold back some things as surprises for you, but let's have a look at some of the highlights of what's going on here.

The British edition of THA, which editor Martin Lock has dubbed THA/UK, is now a certainty although a publishing date has not yet been established. As we had tentatively announced earlier, it will contain all-new material by several British writers and artists as well as many of our regular AHPA staff members. The issue will be printed in London and distributed to the several hundred subscribers to Martin's own fanzine, BEMUSING MAGAZINE. There will then be a delay of about six weeks while our U.S. copies take a boat ride across the Atlantic, and then we'll mail THA/UK to all of our CHFC subscribers. I think you'll get a kick out of seeing Martin's editorial approach to the THA concept. The cover illo, incidentally, is a beauty!

In the meantime, fifty copies of THA #9 will enjoy a boat ride in the opposite direction, and upon their eventual arrival in London will be placed in bookshops for sale to British fans. Those of you who may be reading those copies may, I hasten to point out, subscribe to THA and our other AHPA publications without the exhorbitant extra cost of sending us international money orders. You can subscribe through Martin Lock, our British representative, and send your payments directly to him at 33 Chester Road, Northwood, Middx HA6 1BG. See pages 2 and 3 for general information, and contact Martin regarding any other questions you may have.

Before moving on to other subjects, I want to tell everyone how pleased I have been with Mr. Lock's spirited, intelligent handling of his role as our official agent in the United Kingdom. The CHFC seems well on its way to becoming a genuinely international "club," and while our AHPA publications are apparently proving quite popular with British readers, nevertheless our trans-Atlantic progress is largely due, from a practical standpoint, to the resourceful cooperation and efforts of our reliable British agent.

As you all know by now, THE ADVENTURESS #2 was finally published. Needless to say, the delay was caused by unavoidable deadline problems. I have subsequently made some important changes in our staff operating system, however, and I believe we should be able to deal much more successfully with such problems in the future. Most of the camera-ready contents of TA #3 are already in hand. Shamrock and Pixie will return in their second adventure (yes, they'll be in dire trouble again), Alix and Illisone will be back, and the Skull Goddess saga will take a new turn. The issue will include two or three other stories also as you'll see for yourself around the end of March.

Our thanks to those of you who have sent us your thoughtful comments on TA #2 - and incidentally, reader reaction has generally been very positive thus far. One of the reader judgments which has become quite apparent in the light of our first two fiction issues is that there is a place in TA for stories in both the illustrated-prose and the strip formats when they are handled well by writers and artists. We'll continue to develop series in both styles, as well as in various fiction genre.

Speaking of variety, our readers have seemed very pleased with the balance between text and artwork in THA issues. In fact, many have regarded the way in which virtually every text feature has been appropriately illustrated as a relatively unique strongpoint of our publishing concept.

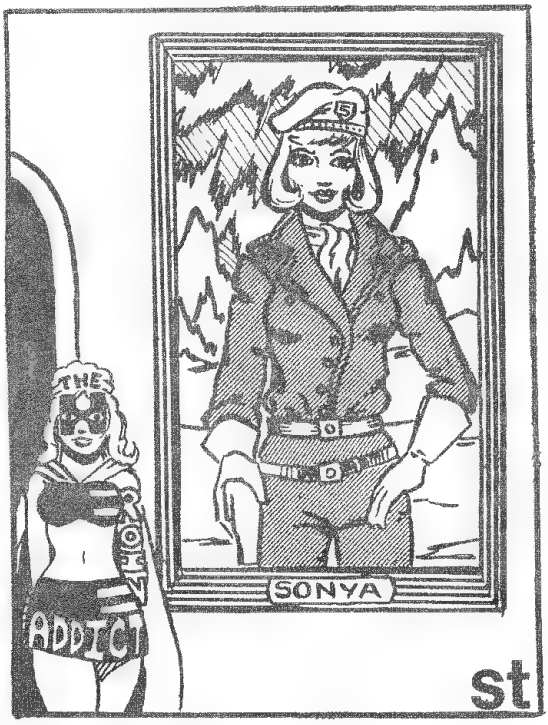
I think the purpose and value of THE HEROINE ADDICT'S ART PORTFOLIO are , therefore, rather obvious. The portfolio gives you a chance to see our popular artists' work when they are turned loose to really do their thing in a zine devoid of text, but devoted entirely to full-scale illustrations! I know (because you've said so) that you have enjoyed their illustrating of our highly-regarded THA articles and columns. Now, in the portfolio, you see them in a "free-style" presentation of their talents and interests.

What do you think? Should the portfolio become an *annual* extravaganza of full-page artwork? Should we switch to a larger (albeit somewhat more expensive) page format for this kind of publication? As usual, we'll be glad to respond to any consensus of reader opinion which may develop. We await your views.

Here's a point I don't want to overlook: If you, as a CHFC subscriber, did *not receive* a copy of THE HEROINE ADDICT'S ART PORTFOLIO #1 along with this copy of THA #9, that is because the current balance in your subscription account was not sufficient to cover the cost of both zines. When you send us a payment to renew your account, be sure to include a request for the portfolio. This is a special issue which our readers and lettercol writers are no doubt going to be talking about for a long time to come. Don't let yourself be left out.

THE HEROINE GALLERY

by Scott Taylor



Known only as Sonya, this ex-Communist security agent once helped the Fightin' Five complete one of their missions and defected at the same time! An FF member killed during that mission was replaced by Sonya, but though the CIA cleared her, when she donned her blue uniform she was still not fully trusted by some members! This all took place in the pages of Charleton's comic THE PEACEMAKER.

By the way, the above point is a good example of why so many of our readers make sure to keep their account balances paid up at all times. (One subscriber has a current balance of more than $20 for instance.) That's the only way a heroine addict can be sure not to miss any of our regular mailings of new AHPA material. I hope you can take a hint.

According to the latest reports, Dwayne and Mercy have THE COMPLEAT DIRECTORY OF COMICS HEROINES (and villainesses) moving along right in line with its estimated publication date. I've seen a copy of Dwayne's layout of the first page and have given the format and content my wholehearted approval. This will obviously be a terrific reference book for all comics fans, and "scholarly value" aside, it will be fascinating just to browse through the

write-ups and illustrations of hundreds of adventure fems of the present and past. If you're a serious collector in the comics field, you'll probably want to invest in more than one copy of this very-special publication when it becomes available. Yes, it could easily become, in due course, a genuine collectors's item.

While on the subject of investments, I can report now that the high-bidders in our fourth auction of original AHPA artwork bought 39 of the 51 published illustrations offered, paying a total of $110.70. All payments have been received and all original artwork mailed to the high-bidders.

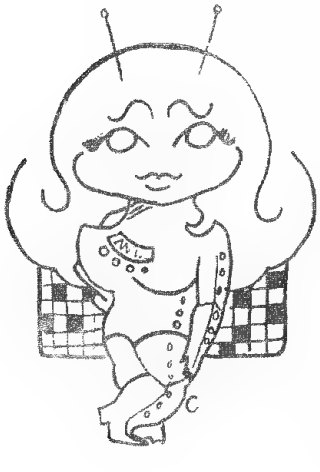
More and more of you, by the way, are beginning to submit bids in our original-inked-artwork auctions, and I hope this trend will continue in our fifth auction, for which you have already received bidding forms. From what they've told me, high-bidders have been more than satisfied with their investments, and I hope more of you CHFC members will be successful in starting or furthering your personal collections of original artwork through our AHPA auction offerings.

Speaking again of our plans for the future, one has to do with our THA covers. The logo which you've seen first on the cover of this issue will be appearing on the covers of all future issues, superimposed, of course, on a series of double-page illustrations by our top artists. The lettering designed by Mercy Van Vlack carries out our basic idea beautifully, and I think you'll agree that the use of this distinctive standard superimposed logo will add a nice touch of extra class to THA. We expect to follow a similar plan on covers for THE ADVENTURESS.

There have been some new developments in our AHPA staff organization also, as you may have noticed on the page-three masthead. Steve Johnson has been appointed assistant editor and will be handling some important responsibilities in organizing certain special publications and projects. His role should help to make our overall publishing operation more effective, to the benefit of everyone concerned. Some of you may be hearing from him in connection with future AHPA activities. Steve's series of profiles of Golden Age comics heroines begins in this issue, and with appropriate input from me and other staff members, he will be producing a new feature, "Fan Focus," which will replace the Awards page starting with THA #10.

Tom O'Reilly has returned to artwork on a more-or-less full-time professional basis, and this has paved the way for his appointment as AHPA art editor, a post he would otherwise have assumed quite a while ago. Tom will help in various ways to develop and coordinate the growing "art department" of the AHPA.

We are very pleased to welcome the talented Wes Smith as a new staff artist. He has drawn the cover assignment for THA #10 and will no doubt rapidly gain a whole new flock of fans within the CHFC.



Chris Padovano's popular charicatures have, of course, become a fixture in the quarterly Club News as we spotlight "the heroine of honor." This time our supererogate salute goes to the newest TV adventure heroine, The Bionic Woman. (Meanwhile, we are still hoping to see ABC inaugurate a *Wonder Woman* series sooner or later. Perhaps the success of BW will influence the network's thinking in regard to WW.)

Chris's unique charicature style will also be applied to illos accompanying a series of tongue-in-cheek limericks by one of our overseas members starting in this issue. (Please don't everyone try

OVERSEAING THE SCENE

Phantom Lady, with no mask in place,
Still in secret identity stays;
And the reason is clear:
In that costume, I fear,
Not a man she meets looks at her face!

- Kathleen Glancy
Edinburgh, Scotland

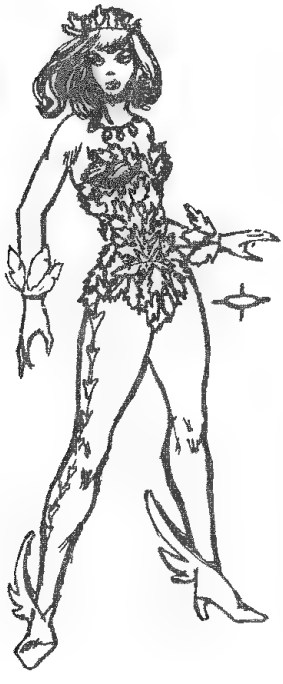
to send us limericks, however. If we decide to seek more of them for publication later, we will let you all know.)

In the midst of everything else that's going on, we are proceding with our plans to produce photocopied special-order booklets and other material on a non-subscription basis for fans with special interests which lie beyond the scope of THE ADVENTURESS. What we have in mind (though this oversimplifies the matter) is to create adventure stories which sort of "pick up where WONDER WOMAN and the original *The Avengers* TV series left off." They'll be illustrated on a professional basis by some of our most able and experienced artists.

If you are among those who have requested information concerning our special-order material and have not yet received same, don't worry, you will be notified of what becomes available. It looks as if 8-to-12-page booklets will have to be priced within the $2-to-$4 range, by the way, and we regretfully acknowledge that they will lie beyond the budgets of most of the comic-book-reading younger CHFC members. Actually, we expect most of their buyers to be non-THA subscribers for just that very reason, although in that connection perhaps I should make it clear here that they will not be "for adults only" as far as the nature of their content is concerned. Our special-order material will in some respects be "inappropriate" for inclusion in THE ADVENTURESS, but it will not fall into the category of pornography or "adult literature."

As our staff members and those other readers who subscribe to the monthly AHPA Staff Bulletin have already seen in one of the reviews we have photocopied in the bulletin, THA has been described by a reviewer in a prominent British magazine as being, in his words, "the friendliest U.S. fanzine I've seen." While I hastily disclaim any definitive knowledge of what makes a fanzine "friendly," I nevertheless gladly accept this particular accolade on behalf of our certainly-very-friendly AHPA staff. We all hope that we have come through to *you* in that way, and we'll try to continue to do so. After all, that's what we feel the semi-professional publishing game is all about!

I'm afraid there's no friendly way to point out the slight increase in THA and TA prices as of this issue other than simply to explain that this increase is *necessary* if we are to continue to produce these zines for you in the face of higher postage rates and other rising costs. I'm sure you'll agree that our prices are still well in line with those charged by other publishers of specialized limited-press material of comparable scope and quality.



Vault of Villainesses

World Public Enemy Number One! Believe it or not, Poison Ivy once possessed that title, although her standing has certainly dropped in recent years. She became Number One after beating the other three contestants: Dragon Fly, Tiger Moth, and Silken Spider (the Catwoman must have been in prison, to say nothing of all the male villains on Earth-1).

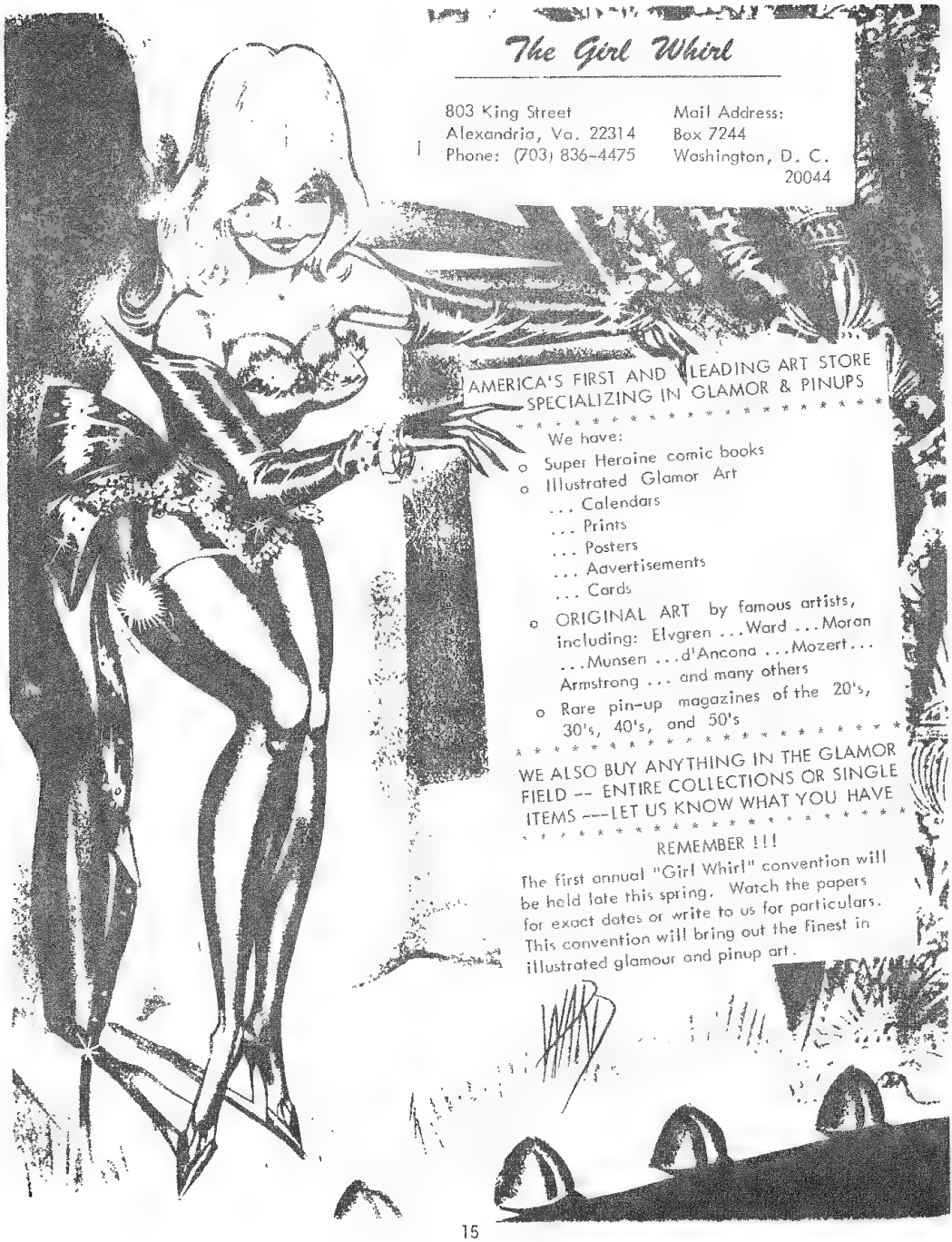
Pamela Isley, an auburn-tressed beauty with the (mutant?) ability to "scale walls like ivy", became the villainous Poison Ivy, using her extensive horticultural knowledge against her foes. While experimenting with various plants, she must have found one which can weaken a man's will, making it easy for him to be hypnotized. She used this strategy with the Batman in her first appearances. His case of "poison ivy" made it difficult to defeat her.

Her first weapons were in her hair, different strands would contain explosives or poisons. After her release from prison, however, she apparently stopped using this method, probably because of the high risk involved. During a fight she might pull out the wrong strand, a mistake that might lead to her capture. More recently, with the help of Chronos, a fellow-felon, she developed a gun that would accelerate plant growth. This weapon was smashed by Aquaman, but when she gets out of prison again she will probably construct another one.

After her initial capture by the Batman, she apparently lost confidence in her own abilities. When she fought the Thorn, she was working with the 100 and had their gunmen backing her up. In her next appearance, she had joined the Injustice Gang of the World, a group of oft-defeated villains that found safety in numbers. Not being willing to trust each other, they were easily defeated by the Justice League. When she is released from prison, perhaps she will realize that alliances have gotten her no further than she was before, and go back to working alone. Batman would probably be no match for her plant growth-accelerator; Aquaman only defeated her because of his superior strength. The Thorn also makes a great foe for her -- the Floral Fury against the Viny Villainess! If the Thorn ever returns in new stories, Poison Ivy is a logical choice for her first adventure.

One aspect of her personality that fortunately has not been dredged up in her subsequent appearances has been her affection for Batman. When she first fought him, she was obviously attracted to him, much like many of his other female foes. Perhaps her long stay in prison after he captured her caused her to realize that he wasn't worth loving. Besides, between Catwoman and Talia, Ivy wouldn't have much of a chance for Batman's love. One more "villainess-who-loves-Batman" would be more than I could take!

POISON IVY's appearances: BATMAN #181 and #183, LOIS LANE #116, JUSTICE LEAGUE #111



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"The Return of The Bionic Woman"

An Evaluation
By Kirk Hastings

"Sweet Jaime, I'll love you forever
For I know we'll never part.
I love you like I've loved no other
Make room for me in your heart."

--- From the song "Sweet Jaime" (1975)

As of this writing, nighttime network TV's first regular series featuring a super-powered heroine has passed its third episode, and the saga of Jaime Sommers, otherwise known as "The Bionic Woman", continues from where it first began 'way back in March of 1975. The character has come a long way (baby?) since that time, and last issue I attempted to briefly chronicle her "birth" on THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN, her subsequent "death", and then her "rebirth" months later on the same series. This issue I will concern myself with shedding some insight on her development (and possible ruination) since the start of her own series.

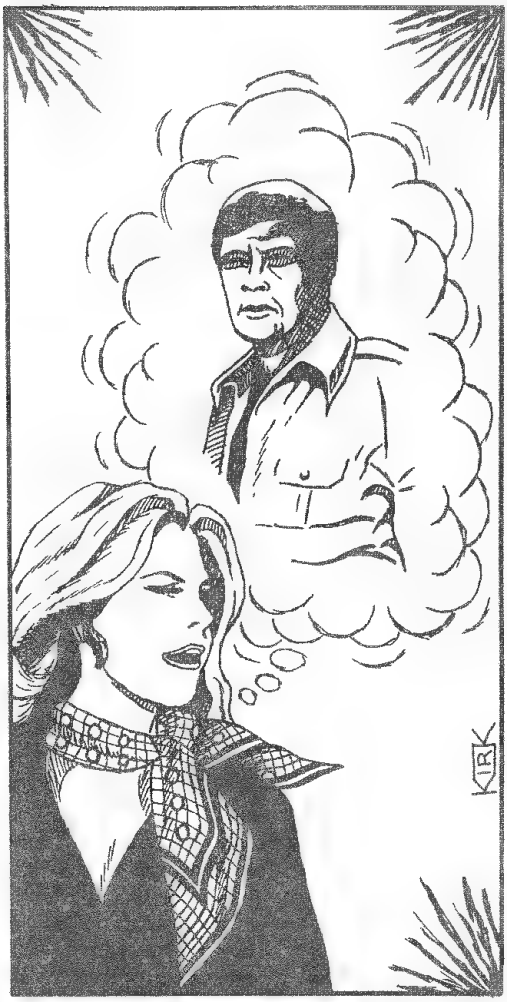
On the September 21st (1975) episode of THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN, where we last saw Jaime before the inception of her own series (excluding reruns) she was spirited away to a Colorado hospital complex for "peace and rest", still remembering nothing of her past life and her fiancee-to-be, Steve Austin. This was a very painful situation for Austin, even though, paradoxically, it came about because of his own suggestion. Thus did the producers of THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN prepare Jaime for entry into her own TV vehicle --- they had, in effect, successfully "liberated" Jaime from her originator, lover, and fiancee, Steve Austin, without whom she never would have become "The Bionic Woman". She was then "free" mentally, emotionally, and physically from Austin, so that each character could go their separate ways.

Thus did the producers make their first mistake.

Since the ratings for the "Bionic Woman" episodes of THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN boosted the program into the top 5, the show's producers naturally became anxious to try to duplicate that feat week after week, by placing Jaime in her <u>own</u> series. And this is exactly what they did. But, in this writer's opinion, they made one serious error that could possibly, at worst, mean the premature death of <u>both</u> THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN and the new BIONIC WOMAN.

The nature of that error is this: the producers of THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN don't seem to realize that most of the inherent charm of the character Jaime Sommers comes <u>not</u> from the fact that she is simply a "bionic woman" --- but from the

fact that she is a "bionic woman" in love with Steve Austin, a "bionic man". In other words, the relationship between Steve and Jaime is what made the original "Bionic Woman" episodes so fascinating --- and so heartbreakingly tragic, when Jaime died on the operating table and Steve whispered a tearful goodbye to her.



But now all that has been changed. Part of the tragic effect of the original episodes faded when Jaime was subsequently restored to life, but this loss of dramatic effect was overcome by the sheer expectancy of having Steve and Jaime back together again.

But now even that is gone --- the characters are now almost totally separated from each other: Jaime still doesn't remember that she once loved Steve Austin, and Austin has suddenly (abruptly might be a better word) stopped dreaming of the girl he once loved over all others. Only infrequent, minor "crossovers" of the characters from one series to another supports the fact that they ever knew each other at all. And these appearances are "played down" so that they are for continuity purposes only. One wonders how long it will be before the shows' producers have Steve and Jaime both find new "steadies", as they're already leaning in that direction with both shows.

The big question is: can the TV audience be satisfied with returning to watching a "mechanical", unemotional, one-sided Steve Austin on Sunday nights after seeing the fascinating new side to his character that Jaime brought out so dramatically? And can that same TV audience also sustain its interest in Jaime Sommers on Wednesday nights minus Steve Austin?

This writer, personally, thinks not. Though I happen to like both characters and both shows a great deal, I would be very surprised to see THE BIONIC WOMAN last beyond this TV season. And I'm still reserving judgment on THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN. On the other hand, maybe I'll be pleasantly surprised. Steve and Jaime manage to get themselves out of some pretty tight situations with the aid of their artificial strength ---

Can they hope to overcome the pressures of an artificial medium?

"I'VE GOT YOU ROPED NYOKA!
NOW I'LL TIE YOU TO A TREE---"

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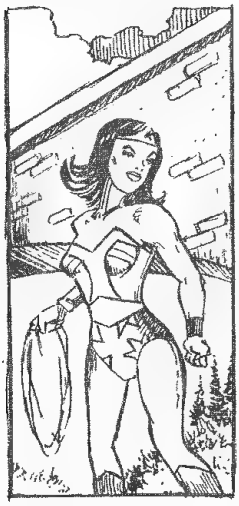
PRESENTING... AN ALL-HEROINE ISSUE

by Scott Gibson

Any heroine-fan worth his or her mettle should be made aware of an 'All-Girl Extravaganza' published by National Periodicals in 1969. If you are a follower of DC's super-femmes and you don't already own DC SPECIAL #3, then I strongly urge you to scare up a copy from somewhere. It was only the first of a couple of salutes to the DC heroines, and majority opinion holds that it was not a very good one, but the fact that it was an all-heroine book is a mark of distinction.

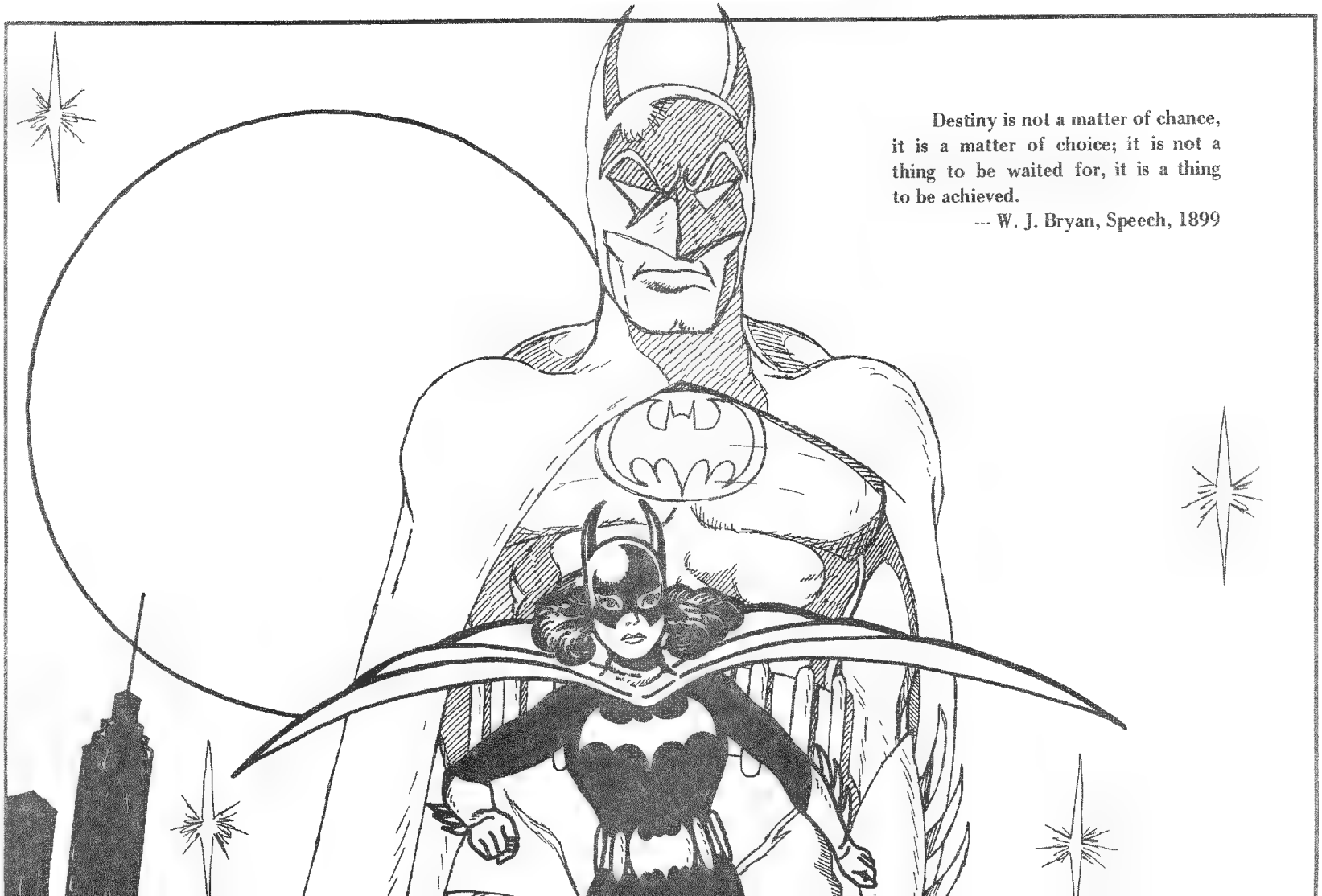


All early issues of DC SPECIAL carried the tag line "The Daring and the Different." And there was never a reprint magazine more qualified to say that. The editors obviously spent a good deal of time selecting interesting and unique "themes" and good reprints. The 3rd issue (April-June, 1969, 25¢, 64 pages), was an All-Heroine edition, highlighted by a beautiful Neal Adams/Nick Cardy cover. The interior contents were something less than spectacular, however. The book started off with a never-before-printed Golden Age Wonder Woman story, "The Cheetah's Thought Prisoners." After reading a few pages, it is easy to tell why it had never been printed. The tale was extremely confusing, as it dealt with a 'thought-prism' which could make a person appear to look like anyone he or she wanted to. The prism had been stolen by The Cheetah, and throughout the tale, it was difficult to tell who was whom. The Cheetah used this invention to disguise herself in about four different roles, while making Etta Candy, the other Holliday girls and Paula Von Gunter all appear as Cheetah herself. Understandably confusing? It was noble of DC to give us a look at vintage Wonder Woman, but surely a better and less complicated story might have been substituted.

This was followed by a reprint of one of the best Supergirl stories ever written; "The Maid of Menace," which recounted the Girl of Steel's first confrontation with her arch-foe, Black Flame. Fast-paced and intelligent, and the presence of Supergirl's number one foe made the tale an excellent choice for the issue.

But the issue's high point was a vintage Black Canary 8-pager. Also a Golden Age story which had never seen print, "Special Delivery Death" stands as testimony to why that era was dubbed the Golden Age. Script, plot, art...everything was excellent.

But then subject matter began to stray. The editors threw in a dubious science-fiction reprint titled "Girl in the Golden Flower," which dealt with a fantasy girl that some lovesick guy kept meeting in his dreams. It had almost no bearing on the issue's theme. The book wound to a conclusion by reprinting Green Lantern's first encounter with his "friendly foe," Star Sapphire. While this story did bear more relation to the heroine-theme, it seemed to open an entirely new avenue of adventures featuring villainesses, rather than ringing down the curtain on a semi-triumphant showcase of DC's super-heroines.



Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.

--- W. J. Bryan, Speech, 1899

KIRK

GOLDEN AGE GIRLS

Featuring: Golden Girl (with Captain America)
In: "Golden Girl" (origin story) - 12pgs.
From: Captain America Comics #66 - April 1948

Bucky's been shot!

After years of battling countless Nazis, Japs, and assorted villians, Bucky is shot by the villianess Lavender in his attempt, with Captain America, to stop a robbery of ambergris; "an essential ingredient of most expensive perfumes".

Cap abandons the fight and lets Lavender and her gang escape as he rushes Bucky to the hospital. Bucky pulls through a tough operation, but remains in critical condition, and unmasked (!) in the hospital, for the rest of the story.

A touch of realism in comics? Or perhaps, an excuse to introduce a new character to the strip? (Right, heroine fans!)

Cap is encountered by his old girl friend, Betsy Ross (honest!), at the hospital, who offers her condolences on Bucky's condition. Cap goes in to see Bucky and promises at Bucky's bedside to "get Lavender" for him. Cap and Betsy leave the hospital together, and the thought occurs to Cap that he should have a partner to help catch Lavender. And why not "a woman to help capture a woman"? Why not Betsy Ross?

"Later Betsy Ross has a caller..."; Captain America, asking to talk with her! While Betsy finishes the dishes, Cap asks her if she went in for athletics in school. A very candid Betsy admits to having won the woman's hundred meter race in college, and to having been the champion weight lifter among the girls. She also reveals that she studied boxing and wrestling under two former champions.

She naturally follows her resume with the question, "why?". And Cap responds by removing his mask to Betsy's exclaimation of "Steve Rogers!".

Cap asks Betsy to become his partner while Bucky is in the hospital, and she accepts. The following days are busy as she recieves training from Cap and as she designs her costume.

"Night, and through the shadows move Captain America and his new partner", Golden Girl! Cap and GG find Lavender engaged in stealing a shipment of furs. In the ensuing battle, an over zealous GG knocks Cap out of the way of a knife thrown by Lavender. This action leads to the escape of Lavender and her gang, with the furs. Cap later explains to GG that he had seen the knife and could have easily protected himself with his shield.

Several days pass and a disconsolate Betsy is trying to forget her failure in her first battle, when she spots one of the stolen furs on a lady on the street. After some great detective work and a painstaking hunt, Betsy arrives, in costume, at the apartment of Steve Rogers.

A quick explaination, a change into costume by Cap, and a cross town jaunt, finds Cap and GG soon engaged in a battle with Lavender and her gang. Cap takes care of the gang, while GG captures Lavender with a well aimed bottle of lavender (naturally!) perfume.

Lavender and her gang are turned over to the authorities, and Cap and GG seal their adventure with a kiss.

Later, Cap and GG visit Bucky at the hospital and tell him of what has transpired. Bucky promises to get well quickly, so that Betsy doesn't do him out of his job, and Cap closes with the compliment, "No crime fighter

Costume: Yellow/Gold, with green skull cap, cape, belt, and boots
Mask: Black
Hair: Blonde

ever had two partners like you."

Unfortunately the $15 to $30 price tag puts this historic issue out of the reach of many heroine fans. But this well drawn 12 page story is certainly worth owning.

The story and art present Golden Girl as an intelligent, sensitive, athletic, and incredibly beautiful heroine. One drawback in the story is that the great detective work done by GG in tracing the stolen fur back to Lavender, is condensed to a single line of script. This would have made quite an exciting story in itself, as a novice heroine goes out on her own!

Bucky did not disappear from the pages of C.A. with the intro of Golden Girl. In this same issue Bucky appears in a 6 page story with Cap, as healthy as ever. It is likely that Bucky continued to appear with Cap in the other stories which backed up the appearances of Cap and GG in Captain America Comics.

****

Golden Girl continued as Cap's partner, and appeared with him in:

Captain America Comics #66-68,70-73 (April 1948 - July 1949)
cover appearances: #67,68,70-72

Marvel Mystery Comics #87-92 (August 1948 - June 1949)

****

Steven R. Johnson, 16385 Two Bar Rd., Boulder Creek, CA 95006

ISIS

BY RICH MORRISSEY

It may be that we owe the presence of the first regular TV series featuring a super-heroine to pure accident. I've heard that, hoping to repeat the success of his tremendously popular "Shazam!" TV show, Norm Prescott attempted to get the rights to Captain Marvel's old Fawcett chum, Ibis the Invincible, but found them too expensive. Not one to let a good idea go down the drain, his Filmation studio cooked up a feminized version of the Egyptian hero.

Nevertheless, Prescott has taken great pains to tie his new "Isis" show in with "Shazam!," which immediately preceds it on the Saturday morning schedule. In exchange for the comic-book rights to Isis (which at present it has no intention of using), DC has agreed to let the two series be presented together as the "Shazam/Isis Hour." Filmation's attempt to link what are basically two seperate series has resulted in some amusing narrative doubletalk, such as "And now for some scenes from next week's 'Shazam/Isis Hour' -- Part I: 'Shazam!'" It also means that "Isis" actually starts slightly before it's official time of 10:30 -- as I learned to my sorrow after "Shazam" reverted to reruns. (In Central zones it begins at 9:30 -- a little too early for Bob, so he's pressured me into reviewing it for him.)

At first "Isis," though deriving many elements from it's successful predecessor, seemed to be aimed at a somewhat older audience. Andrea Thomas, who derives her Isis powers from an ancient amulet given to her Egyptian ancestress, Queen Hatchepsut (information derived from the opening segment -- regrettably, no origin episode has been done) was originally intended to be -- and in the early segments, appeared to be -- a college professor. Although the stories did contain the "kids in trouble" theme worked to death by "Shazam!" -- and, like Captain Marvel, Isis would repeat the moral at the end to make sure the viewers understood it -- there were also plenty of genuine adult criminals for Isis to battle (at least as much as the present creed of nonviolence would allow) with the natural powers granted her by her namesake goddess. There were even some relatively mature (for a children's program) elements of mystery; one episode involved an ex-convict who was victimized by an unknown criminal's frame-up; another involved very odd-looking UFO's. The money that was saved on flying scenes (if I tried to fly in the position Isis uses, my back would ache for a month) was evidently used for better special effects and less severely limited casts than those in "Shazam!"

The very attractive JoAnna Cameron (she spells her name in that outre fashion) portrayed Andrea and her alter-ego with depth, sensitivity and a sense of humor. Rick Mason, a colleague of Andrea's whose exact relationship with her remains a matter of conjecture, was portrayed somewhat less well adequately by Brian Cutler, and Joanna Pang was somewhat better as Cindy Lee, Andrea's young lab assistant. (And it's nice, for once, to see an Oriental character who is not a villain or a master of the martial arts!)

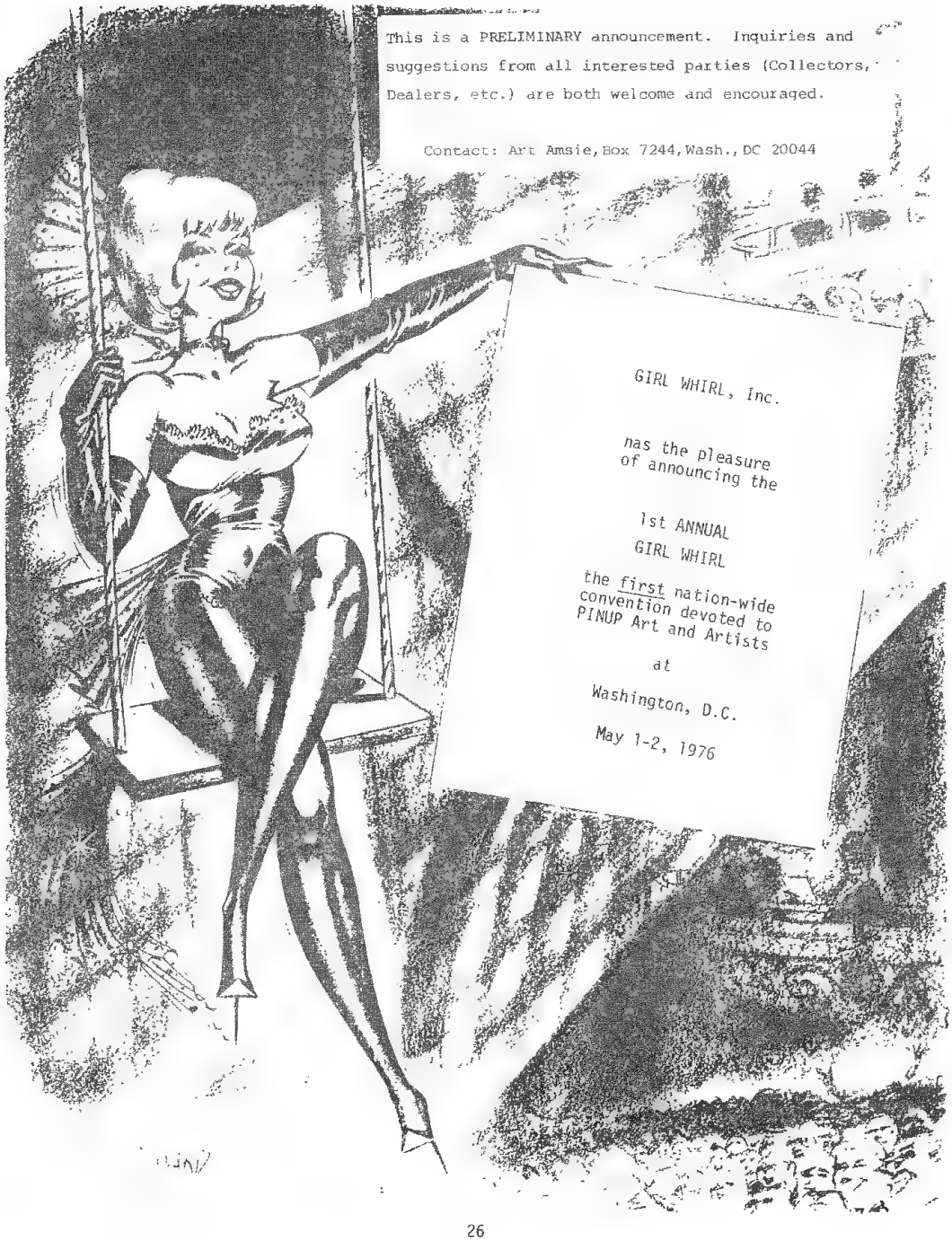
All in all, it looked as if this was a series that would successfully capture the female audience -- and a large proportion of the male audience past the age of puberty.

Unfortunately, some changes have been made in the format since the program's inception -- not all of them for the better. Andrea and Rick have now been established as high school teachers, evidently to bring the students' age level closer to that of it's audience. This isn't a bad move in itself, but the setting still bears traces of the original intention (the loose scheduling of classes, Andrea's very elaborate chemistry lab), and the early episodes especially appear somewhat incongruous.

Worse, the format has drifted closer and closer to that of "Shazam!" -- week after week of kids risking their lives to gain acceptance of the crowd, and little other challenge of any sort for the hero(ine). The predicaments are even less original, sometimes downright corny -- one show even featured the eternal escaped gorilla who "made friends" with Isis in a totally ridiculous (unintentionally, I'm sure) ending. (Why not a man-eating wolf for a change? Because gorilla suits are handy!) Isis also appeared on one "Shazam!" episode which was handled somewhat better, but still suffered, as usual, from an overly obvious "lesson." (Despite the "Shazam/Isis Hour" title, apparently no double-length episode featuring both characters have been considered.) One interesting point in that story is that Andrea understood at once Mentor's allusion to the "Elders" when first contacted by him -- but as Shazam was an Egyptian and is clearly on good terms with the Egyptian gods (from whom else could he have obtained his powers before Solomon, Hercules, and Achilles were born?) it isn't too hard to explain. (Captain Marvel later returned the visit, by the way.)

"Isis" still has it's good points, though -- especially the heroine herself in the delightful miniskirted costume. And some of the shows still rise above the normal run-- the one aired on October 18, in which Isis had to explain the death of a dog to it's young master, was very sensitively and movingly handled. (Interestingly, Maude Findlay was faced with this identical problem two days later on the same network, though of course it was treated much differently and was no doubt coincidental.) I suppose it might be considered something of an evasion that it didn't deal with, say, the boy's grandfather's death instead, but it was still and uncommon and courageous gesture for a children's program, especially with this season's emphasis on slapstick comedy.

No, "Isis" isn't a great or memorable series, but to me at least it's worth the time it takes to watch it. Try it and see for yourself.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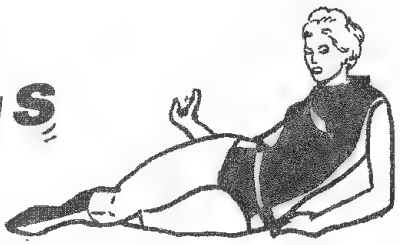


The appearance of Light Lass in this issue's logo prompts me to a long-overdue appeal. More Legionnairesses, please! At last count there were only twenty-two active Legionnaires, which leaves room for three more members. The recently-introduced Tyroc will probably be the twenty-third, but why can't we get the other two spaces fileed with heroines? especially since we lost two ladies with the resignations of Duo Damsel and Supergirl. Current possibilities include Calorie Queen, White Witch, and Quantum Queen -- or what about another girl from Cargg, who could be the second Triplicate Girl?

*****

While we're still on the subject of Legionnairesses, you might be interested in hearing that I actually had the opportunity of meeting one in person. I was at the Creation Con in New York, at the Costume Parade, when I saw Princess Projectra, here in the twentieth century under the alias of the CHFC's own Mercy Van Vlack. Other heroines in attendance were Gamora (from WARLOCK) and the Black Widow. Gamora won first place, and Projectra came in fourth.

*****

It was too bad that "Wonder Woman" didn't make it as a mid-season replacement, but since we have "The Bionic Woman" as a consolation prize things aren't all that bad. The actress, Lindsay Wagner, has a certain charm that comes across especially well, and I find myself liking this show much more than its companion "The Six Million Dollar Man."

*****

Will Batwoman ever make a comeback? Things have looked bleak for her return for over ten years, but the lettercol of BATMAN FAMILY #5 sounded the first hopeful note. It was actually indicated that there is indeed a chance for a new appearance of Kathy Kane and her adventurous alter ego, depending on reader response. And I don't want to hear any remarks about what a silly character she was, either. Many of her adventures were quite good. Besides, there's no such thing as a "bad" character; it all depends on how it's handled.

*****

The Gone-but-not-Forgotten Dept.: Anyone out there remember Madame Masque? Of course you do! She began her career, as do most Marvel heroines, as a villainess, but she later reformed and worked with Iron Man on a few occasions. After that she mysteriously disappeared, and hasn't been seen since. Since the cast of supporting characters in IRON MAN changes completely about every two years, she has been one of the many casualties. But it would be nice to see her again, if not in IRON MAN, then perhaps in DEFENDERS or CHAMPIONS.

*****

That's all for this issue. Comments and suggestions may be addressed to: Dwayne Best...6 Nobile Lane
Poughkeepsie, New York 12603

@HEFAC HERE, ABOUT TO INTERVIEW EVERY-ONE'S FAVORITE METAL PERSON....
AND I'LL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO...
TINA.
TINA?
YES.
OH....
WHY NOT START BY INTRODUCING US TO THE OTHER FEMALE "METAL MEN..."
"FIRST WOULD BE NAMELESS, TIN'S GIRLFRIEND. TIN BOUGHT A DO-IT-YOURSELF ROBOT KIT FROM MACY'S, AND DOC SUPPLIED THE RESPONSO-METER. A NICE KID WHO HELPED US OUT UNTIL ABOUT ISSUE 32, WHEN SHE JUST DISAPPEARED FROM SIGHT. THE TRUE REASON FOR HER LEAVING HAS NEVER BEEN REVEALED, BUT I SUSPECT IT WAS BECAUSE MIKE SEKOWSKY COULDN'T DRAW HER...
"AND THEN THERE WAS THE SIZZLER, THE EVIL CREATION OF PROF. SNAKELOCKS, WHO FIRST TRIED TO KILL US (ISSUE 22), THEN FELL IN LOVE WITH DOC (ISSUE 23), THEN BLEW UP IN HIS FACE (ISSUE 25)! SHE WAS ALSO RESPON-SIBLE FOR MAKING THE METAL MEN HUMAN AND DOC MAGNUS A ROBOT, WHICH CONFUSED A LOT OF NEW READERS."
7602.7

NAMELESS'S FINAL ISSUE GAVE US AN ARMY OF FORGED FEMMES TO BATTLE, AND IT'S A GOOD THING DOC HAD RECENTLY CREATED A BAND OF METAL WOMEN TO HELP. NO HOPE FOR A COMEBACK; THEY WERE ALL KILLED BY ISSUE'S END.

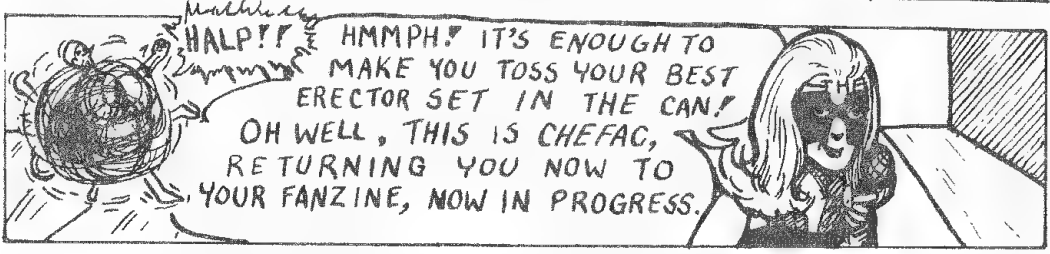
IRIDIA

BLACK WIDOW

AND WHEN DOC BUILT A SECOND TEAM OF METAL MEN, THIS UGLY THING WAS MY REPLACEMENT. A REAL LOSER WHO WAS ALWAYS THROWING HERSELF AT DOC MAGNUS IN THE MOST DISGUSTING WAY... (ISSUE # 31)

AS WAS THIS "LADY," WHO CAME CLOSER TO MARRYING DOC THAN I EVER DID, BUT ONLY BY CONVINCING HIM SHE WAS A LADY. I SAVED DOC BY REVEALING HER AS A GIANT ROBOT BLACK WIDOW SPIDER! (ISSUE #17)

HERE'S A REAL PUZZLER. ON ONE FAR-OUT... I MEAN FAR-OFF PLANET, THE "HUMANS" WERE METALLIC MODS, AND THE "ROBOTS" WERE HUMAN-LOOKING ANDROIDS, LIKE THE ONE PICTURED ABOVE. (ISSUE # 26)


HALP!!
HMMPH! IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU TOSS YOUR BEST ERECTOR SET IN THE CAN!
OH WELL, THIS IS CHEFAC, RETURNING YOU NOW TO YOUR FANZINE, NOW IN PROGRESS.
THE

WE MUST BE DOING SOMETHING---WRITE!

[illegible],977 VERNON DR., CHARLESTON, SC, 29412

THE HEROINE REVUE

FLY GIRL

by Scott Gibson

THE FLY #14 (Sept., 1961) "The Menace of the Metal Monster"

On location in Capital City to shoot a science-fiction movie, actress Kim Brand was visited in her dressing room by an unusually-dressed man from another dimension. "I am Turan, Emissary of the Fly People," he told the lovely blond girl. "I have brought you this ring! It is exactly like the one The Fly wears!" (The Fly was, of course, a super-hero who had been buzzing around busting up crime for a couple of years at the time this tale took place. In fact, this story had actually begun with the Fly and Kim meeting on the set just a few moments before she entered her dressing room.) As Turan slipped the ring on the astonished actress' finger, he related the tale of his people—a civilization which had lived on the Earth millions of years earlier. They had developed magic to a powerful degree, but greed and corruption brought about a worldwide war which destroyed most of the populace and all of their wonderful inventions. A handful of survivors managed to escape to another dimension. Those left behind were reduced to nothing more than insects, which, years later, became known as flies.

Turan further explained to Kim Brand that the reason he had come to her and given her the ring was because The Fly was currently facing two disasters of epic proportion, and could not handle both of them alone. "Thus, we decided to give another person the same powers, so that TWO of you can fight evil! Now rub the ring, and say the words—'Fly-Girl!'" The actress obeyed, and instantly was transformed into Fly Girl. She wore a costume very similar to Turan's, and almost identical to The Fly's, with yellow boots and gloves, yellow trunks and belt, and a holster at her side, equipped with 'buzz-gun.' The legs, arms and torso portions of the costume were of a dark green hue. In addition, the outfit was complemented by a large pair of transparent "fly" wings. The only difference in costumes were the masks—The Fly wore a full yellow cowl with goggles, where Fly Girl sported only a small green eye-mask.

Turan informed the heroine that she had only to rub her ring and speak her civilian name to return to her other identity. Then, Fly Girl soared off into action for the first time. She aided The Fly in overcoming the two disasters.

Naturally, the Fly was astonished to discover another human bestowed with the same costume and powers as his own. Once everything was once more in control, he congratulated the heroine and then demanded to know who she was. Suprisingly, Kim told him immediately, and without question. In return, he revealed to her his own alter-ego. Then the pair flew off together to find and defeat the perpetrator of the menaces they had so recently subdued.

Fly Girl's origin was unpretentious, uncomplicated and quick; just like The Fly's had been, two years earlier. Whereas writers usually strive to give sidekick heroes a very different origin from the main star,

Roster of FLY GIRL's Appearances

* = Fly Girl solo adventure

THE FLY

#14 "Menace of the Metal Monster"
#15 "Master of Disaster!"
#16 "War of the Worlds"
#17 "The Test Tube Flies"
"Creature Who Invaded Capital City"
#18 "Visit to the Fly World"
"Horse of Horrors!"
"The Monster Fly"
#19 "The Giant Buzz Gun"
"Night of the Fire Menaces"
"Invasion of the Medieval Monsters" *
#20 "Prince of Flies"
"The Missing Fly Ring"
"Fly Girl for a Day" *
#21 "World of Giant Germs"
"The Anti-Fly League"
"The 30 Costumes of Fly Girl" *
#22 "Practical Joker from Planet X"
"The Comet Monster"
#23 "Ice Giant from Pluto"
"LXOIII's Super Weapon"
#24 "Mystery of the Giant Fly"
"The Insect Gang" *
#25 "Countess of Crime"
#26 "The Spider's Revenge"
#27 "The Great Z-17 Mystery"
"Fly Girl's Pet" *
#29 "The Fly's Worst Enemy"
"The Slave of King Spider"
"The Triple Threat Monster"
#30 "One Minute to Doom"
"The World's Whackiest Crook"
"Fly Girl meets the Comet" *

FLY MAN

#32 "Eterno the Tyrant"
#33 "Fly Man's Treacherous Team-Mates"
#35 "Phantasmon the Terrible"
#36 "Fly Man's Strangest Dilemma" (appears only as Kim Brand)
#39 "Beware the Blockbuster"

THE MIGHTY CRUSADERS

#1 "V.S. the Brain Emperor"
#2
#3 "Evil Lurks Among Us"
#4 "Too Many Super-Heroes"
#7 "Origin of Fly Girl" *

Fly Girl also appeared in reprints in the Archie SUPER-HEROES v.s. SUPER-VILLAINS book #1.

the creators were content to have Kim Brand's powers spring from the very same source and under the same condition as the Fly's. It seemed logical—more logical than believing that the Flash and Kid Flash could both have gained their super-speed abilities in separate, yet identical lab accidents.

The twenty page tale, although well-drawn, featured a cartoonishly-depicted villain called the Metal Master, whose charicaturistic appearance clashed violently with his more realistically drawn surroundings. The Fly placed undue faith in Fly Girl, by immediately revealing his own secret identity to her. It was totally out-of-character for the normally very reserved and cautious hero to display such faith in his newfound ally after having been with her only a few minutes, but the author was evidently anxious to dispense with such formalities and hurry on to more exciting scenes. In all fairness, I must point out that the Fly had known Kim Brand for a long time before she became Fly Girl; that might explain his instant acceptance of her as a super-heroine.

The story, although no literary masterpiece, was fairly well written and held reader interest through-out. Dialogue was somewhat weak, but the action sequences were handled well.

Fly Girl, in fact, was responsible for the final defeat of the villain.

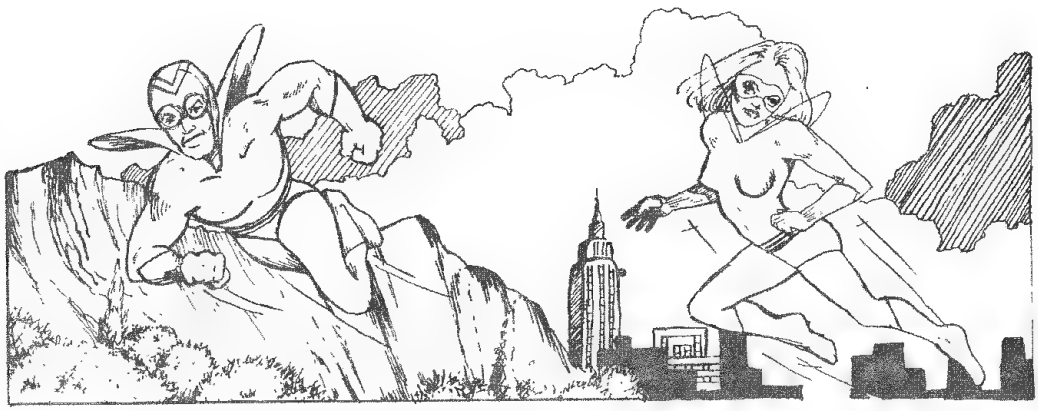
Issues #15 and #16 of THE FLY featured three stories each, with Fly Girl appearing in only one tale per issue. Her role in #15 was minor, but she played a prominent part in #16's "War of the Worlds." By using her wits and saying little, she was able to uncover the secret of the villain, and solved the case entirely on her own.

#17 featured the heroine in 2 stories. The first pitted the King and Queen of the Insect World (as Fly and Fly Girl came to be dubbed) against an alien with a shrinking ray. A shorter tale had Fly Girl disguised as a horrible creature as a ruse to test The Fly's ability to overcome alien menaces. A rather pointless story, "The Creature Who Invaded Capital City" at least settled the question of which hero was the stronger; neither. Fly and Fly Girl had the exact same strength, a nice change from the usual hero/heroine set-up.

#19 led off with a tale called "The Giant Buzz Gun," which gave Fly Girl the chance to save the Fly from an evil alien, as well as to perform several super-stunts. But the issue is more notable because it featured the first solo Fly Girl adventure. Titled "Invasion of the Medieval Monsters," the 6 pager gave FG a chance to exercise her detective abilities, as she uncovered a hoax about a buried treasure.

In THE FLY #20, the Fly and Fly Girl were performing for the kids in a reform school when FG lost her 'fly-ring.' It fell into the hands of one of the kids, who gave it to his sister, when she visited him later. Unfortunately, the sister, Linda Drake, was the head of a criminal gang called the Amazons, and she utilized the ring to turn herself and all of her cohorts into Fly Girls. It was the Fly who finally caught the crooks and returned the ring to Fly Girl, who only sat around and cried because she had lost her ring. Despite the Insect Queen's foolish behavior, we did learn something more about her powers--that, even though she had lost her ring, she retained all of her fly-powers. The theory was that anyone might wear the ring, rub it and say 'Fly Girl' and be transformed into a duplicate of the heroine. The powers of the ring must have been strong indeed. #20 also featured another Fly Girl solo, "Fly Girl for a Day" which was much too similar to the last tale to be of real interest. FG simply 'gave' her powers to the winner of a beauty contest for 24 hours. Ironically, the winner looked exactly like Kim Brand!

Oddly, Fly Girl's foe, Linda Drake was back in the next issue (#21), as she joined a gang called the Anti-Fly league. But she didn't come in contact with Fly Girl at all this time; instead, the Insect Queen was busy in another solo-story, a 5-pager which offered little more than the opportunity of seeing FG in several different colored Fly Girl outfits.



The heroine's next solo adventure was in #24, where she faced "The Insect Gang," a group of thieves who drank a special potion to become super-powered insects. Actually, Fly Girl participated only briefly in the story, and it was Turan, Emmissary from the Fly World who finally overcame the crooks.

"The Countess of Crime" was able to "shock" Fly Girl's brain into a hypnotic state which forced the Insect Queen to do the Countess's bidding, in THE FLY #25. FG wound up sentenced to a ten-year prison term before the Fly was finally able to save her.

"Fly Girl's Pet," FG's next solo adventure, came as a shock. Where all previous stories had been beautifully illustrated, this 5 pager had been drawn in simplistic cartoony style. The plot wasn't much better. Fly Girl adopted a metallic insect as a mascot, until it turned against her and she was forced to destroy it.

Soon, the entire book was beseiged by terrible art and poorly-scripted stories. FG would get only one more solo story, in #30, where she met another super-hero, The Comet. She suspected him of being a super-villain, and they parted at the end of this 5 pager with bitterness, even though the Comet proved to be a hero, after all. This was the last issue of THE FLY. In an effort presumably to boost sales, the publishers re-christened the Fly as FLY-MAN. Issue #31 was not released for another seven months (May, 1965), and numerous changes in the style and direction of the book were obvious. It now carried the 'Archie Series' label on the cover, and Fly-Man and Fly Girl shared the book with three other super-heroes, Black Hood, The Comet (yep, the same guy who had guested with Fly Girl) and The Shield.

Understandably, with so many characters in the book, Fly Girl's role was reduced substantially. Often, she made only cameo appearances in the stories. The art, although better than the work on issues #29 and #30, was still a far cry from the superlative pencil-work in earlier issues.

Sadly, Fly Girl never again appeared on FLY MAN covers. She was pushed into the role of a 'mother-hen,' always keeping her fellow team-mates from fighting with each other.

In #32's "Eterno the Tyrant" it was suddenly disclosed that Fly Girl could only have her special powers for one hour out of every 24. Apparently the writers felt that she was too powerful, and tossed in that limitation to make her more vulnerable. No one bothered to explain why she was suddenly restricted to an hour of super-powers when, previously, there had been no limitation. Naturally, she was kidnapped in her Kim Brand identity only a few pages later, and having used up her hour-allotment, couldn't save herself.

Then, in #33, Fly Girl suddenly began shrinking and enlarging, à la Atom and/or Giant-Man. Again, no explanation was given for the development of this new power.

FLY-MAN became MIGHTY COMICS with issue #40, and both the King and Queen of Insects bowed out entirely, deferring to their more glamorous team-mates.

Fly Girl was on hand when Shield, Black Hood, Comet and Fly-Man formed a group called THE MIGHTY CRUSADERS, and the five of them enjoyed a seven issue run in a title named after their group. The first few issues featured lengthy adventures with all of them, but then the book began featuring the heroes in solo adventures or pair-offs. Fly Girl's final solo came in #7's recap of her origin. While the recap was basically the same, the villain, Metal Master, looked entirely different than he had in FLY #14. Now he had a more humanoid appearance and was blue, instead of silver. After tracing FG's origin, the tale returned to the future, as Fly Girl was forced to do battle with the Metal Master's girlfriend, the Metal Witch, who had come for revenge. It was here that Fly Man and Fly Girl's change of powers was explained. Sometime between FLY #30 and FLY MAN #31, the Fly was summoned to the Fly World and given a new and more powerful ring, which gave both he and FG the ability to enlarge and shrink. Unfortunately, it limited their powers to only one hour a day, a pretty poor bargain, if you ask me. Fly Girl's career lasted a total of 5 years, ending in MIGHTY CRUSADERS #7, (October, 1966).

Dear Al,

I got THE ADVENTURESS #2 today. It was great. Illisone & Alix Part Two was better than the first part. I loved every bit of it...but then the Stella origin story was [also] terrific.

Karla was great. She reminds me of Supergirl. I think Mr. Hastings would have something good if he keeps Chester in the stories. I hope all the other TA zines will turn out to be as good as the first two issues.

Chuck Alligood
Southern Pines, N.C.

Thanks, Chuck. As I've pointed out before, we're always glad to hear that you and our other younger subscribers are enthusiastic about our AHPA work in THA and TA. -A.T.

Dear Al,

You know, it's funny you said what you did, because THA is one of the few zines *I* have time to read and do read. I like the production job especially. It's nice to see someone take time and lay out a zine properly.

Paul Kowtiuk
Essex, Ontario, Canada
Editor: THE JOURNAL

...and we're equally glad to hear nice things from fellow-publishers, several of whom are among our AHPA subscribers. Thanks, Paul. Glad to exchange compliments with you. -A.T.

Dear Al,

Being a devoted Trekkie and CHFC member, I want to point out something quite interesting. An incredible amount of *Star Trek* has come out, including now a Lt. Uhura doll from Mego Corp. The doll is quite worth the cost. And, of course, the doll shows a *black* Lt. Uhura.

Yet Saalfield Company has published a *Star Trek Coloring Book* - with a Lt. Uhura that appears to be *white*, while Power Records have come out with a book-and-record set of *Star Trek* entitled "The Crier In Emtiness" that has a black Lt. Uhura on the cover, but inside has a well-built blonde, *white* Lt. Uhura.

I think it's sad that the major *Star Trek* female can't even have her skin color done right, much less anything else, by anyone other than Roddenberry.

Jim Crawford
Cincinatti, Ohio

Let's hear it for the well-built blonde....No, seriously, Jim, while I'm not a Trekkie, I can sympathize with your reactions in such matters, and I'm glad to pass your observation on to our readers. -A.T.

Dear Al,

Thank you for THA #8.

"She *clobbered* him," if you want it translated. Actually, "clocked him one" is an Anglicism. If I was to use a Lowland Scots term, I'd have to have said "skelped his lug," and then nobody, not even any *Highland* Scots among your readers, would have understood.

I'm glad to see Modesty Blaise putting in an appearance [in THA #8]. She's one of my favorite heroines, and that's only from reading the books - the benighted *Evening Standard* not being available much outside of London, and the abysmal *Scottish Daily Express* preferring the exploits of M.S.P. #1, James Bond and of Matt Dillon, who's known Miss Kitty for about 20 years now and still never kissed her, and totally ignoring any suggestions made by the more intelligent of its readers (says she modestly) that a change would be beneficial. They also cancelled Jeff Hawke. Modesty is, of course, what the Black Widow tries to

be, but isn't quite.

I may forgive *The Scottish Daily Express* their shortcomings. They introduced a *new* comic strip heroine, whose first week's adventures you can see for yourself. Her artist's quite good, but of course uncredited as is the general custom here until a strip is at least 20 years old. It all looks quite promising. The only thing is, looking at that copyright sign, I fear it may all be a well-disguised attempt to sell something: cameras, speedboats, plastic seaweed and barnacles, something like that. Or maybe the efficiency of British Rail, as Pia, rushing to London to get her photos developed, takes the *train*. Aberdeen has a perfectly good airport with regular flights to London.

THA #1-#6 have indeed arrived safely [as a back-issue order] and were well worth the wait.

Kathleen Glancy
Edinburgh, Scotland

Thanks for keeping us all posted, Kathleen. You make a fascinating overseas reporter. Thanks also for sending the five daily strips; I'll include one of them in our next AHPA staff bulletin. -A.T.

Dear Mr. Tanner,

I am sending my bids for your fifth auction. I trust you have entered my name on the list of persons interested in getting announcements of available special-order material. I also ask that you let me know when *The Further Adventures Of Shamrock And Pixie* is on sale so that I can purchase a copy.

Thank you for the fine work you are doing.

R.J. Morris
Rossville, Georgia

All of us on the staff appreciate your thanks and your support. As many of our AHPA writers and artists have said, it's great to hear that the time and thought we invest in our publications results in products that fans like you enjoy.

Yes, you'll surely be notified as soon as the first of our special-order series of S&P stories, along with stories in other series, becomes available. Our special-order S&P artists? Would you believe Tom O'Reilly and Larry Heller! -A.T.

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2nd issue due out by April 1.

Dear Al,

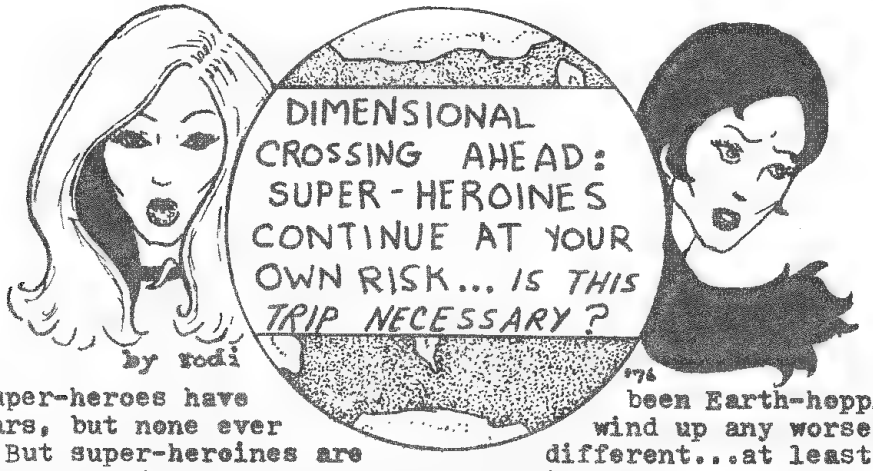
The articles on Aquagirl and Vamirella were very good, and I really liked the article on Modesty Blaise. The centerfold was magnificent. I can't wait till you put this on auction. I'll save my pennies from now till then for this.

Please continue [the THA series on] the Star Trek heroines. Keep up the good work.

The extra [special-order] booklets you were talking about really sounded good until you said $4. That killed it. No way will I ever have $4 extra. What a shame; they sounded good.

Jeff Clark
West Hurly, N.Y.

Yes, Jeff, we agree that it's an unfortunate necessity that we market some of our special products primarily outside the circle of regular CHFC members, and for that very reason, we won't tease you about them with detailed announcements in THA issues. Incidentally we're receiving many eager inquiries. -A.T.



Super-heroes have been Earth-hopping for years, but none ever wind up any worse for wear. But super-heroines are different...at least if Black Canary and Phantom Lady have anything to say about it. In response to a letter from some nosy fan in FREEDOM FIGHTERS #2, Paul Levitz hinted that there may be some connection between the Black Canary/Phantom Lady cases.

In case you're not familiar with said cases; Black Canary of Earth-II and Phantom Lady of Earth-X, two heroines who, on their home-Earths, possessed no extraordinary physical abilites, came to Earth-I on a more-or-less permanent basis. Something happened in the dimensional crossing that altered their make-ups to suit their names. Black Canary became owner of a sonic power she can manifest in her voice (i.e. "Sing, Canary, Sing," and all hell breaks loose). Phantom Lady gained powers similar to Phantom GIRL of the Legion. Both ladies cannot control their powers (as of yet).

Apparently, only heroines alien to Earth-I's universe are affected, and only those who have no double on Earth-I, and then, ONLY are they affected on the trip TO Earth-I. Thusly, Zatanna, Wonder Woman (both of them), Supergirl, Power Girl, Batgirl, and the rest, can Earth-hop all they want.

With all these restrictions, PLUS the apparently poetic development of having the heroines' names turned into fact, we can only assume that the force, whatever it is, causes the reaction magically. Granted, neither Black Canary nor Phantom Lady came to Earth by the magical doorway often employed, but certainly magic exists on more planes than one.

What we have, then, is a mystical force that affects superheroines from Earths other than-I, who cross in ANY manner, and who do not have a double on Earth-I. And ONLY going to Earth-I. And this mystic change manifests itself in turning the heroine's name into reality.

Are these assumptions true? We can only guess...in order to be sure, more crossing has to be done. What if another heroine came to Earth-I? Would Earth-II's Thorn find all her extremities becoming very pointy? Would Ma Hunkle (the Red Tornado) gain super-speed despite her tremendous weight? And what of Earth-III's Superwoman? What about a lady whose name ALREADY fits?

It may be academic at this point, but nosy fans can be persistant. Think about it, anyway. And remember...you read it here first.

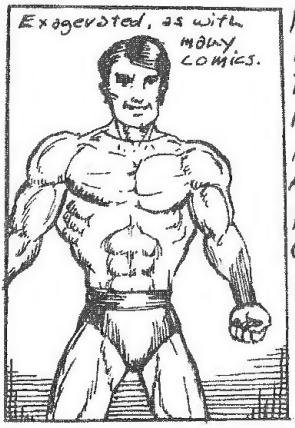
ARTIST'S FORUM

COMMENTARY

GETTING AWAY FROM THE BASIC THEME OF THIS COLUMN FOR JUST A MOMENT, I JUST WANT TO COMMENT ON THE GIANT-SIZE SUPERMAN VS. SPIDERMAN: THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER SEEN A SUPER-PUBLICIZED SPECTACULAR ACTUALLY LIVE UP TO ITS PROMISE! IT'S OVERALL A REALLY FINE WORK! I FEEL ROSS ANDRU SETS A FINE EXAMPLE FOR DYNAMIC PERSPECTIVE AND VIEW POINTS. I FULLY RECOMMEND THIS BOOK, BOTH FOR ENTERTAINMENT AND FOR ITS INSTRUCTIONAL VALUE!

NOW, ON WITH THE SHOW....

SINCE MOST ARTISTS READING THIS COLUMN ARE AT LEAST EQUALLY INTERESTED IN THE DRAWING OF FEMALES AS THEY ARE IN DRAWING THE MORE TRADITIONAL MALE HEROES, I THINK THERE ARE A FEW ITEMS THAT COULD BE POINTED-OUT IN REGARDS TO COMICS DRAWING. THERE IS A POPULAR TREND,



NOW-A-DAYS, TO DRAW SUPER-HEROES SO MUSCULAR THAT THEY APPEAR TO HAVE THEIR SKIN PEALED OFF, AS WITH THIS DRAWING. WHEN DRAWING MALES, AN ARTIST CAN GET AWAY WITH JUST ABOUT ANY MISTAKE IN ANATOMY OR EXAGERATED FEATURES, BUT THERE IS NOTHING THAT LOOKS MORE OUT OF PLACE THAN A MUSCULAR WOMAN! WHEN SELECTING A LIFE DRAWING BOOK, I SUGGEST

YOU FIND ONE THAT CONCENTRATES ON THE FIGURE AS IT IS VIEWED, AND NOT SO MUCH ON OVER-STRESSING ANATOMY.

AS MENTIONED IN AN EARLIER COLUMN, PHOTOS FROM GLAMOUR MAGAZINES ARE HELPFUL FOR FACES, AND FOR FIGURES I SUGGEST YOU FIND SOME OLDER MAGAZINES LIKE PLAYBOY, AROUND '64-'66 or so, OR FULL-FIGURE GLAMOUR PHOTOS AS YOU'LL FIND ADVERTIZED IN PHOTOGRAPHY MAGAZINES. THE REASON I SUGGEST THESE SOURCES RATHER THAN THE MORE COMTEMPORARY "GIRLIE" MAGAZINES IS THAT THESE ARE PHOTOGRAPHED WITH AN EMPHASIS ON ATTRACTIVE WOMEN WITH ARTISTIC COMPOSITION, WHICH I FEEL ARE MORE EASILY ADAPTED TO DRAWING.

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW! ANYTHING YOU WISH TO ADD TO, OR ANY IDEA YOU FEEL HAS BEEN OVERLOOKED? I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOU'D LIKE TO HEAR! WRITE:

ARTIST'S FORUM
c/o TOM LUTH
2543 SUNNYSIDE RIDGE RD.
PALOS VERDES PEN. CALIF.
90274

Vault of Villainesses

by Dwayne Best

"A female...like none who has ever lived within memory of mortal man!" exclaimed Dr. Strange when he first sensed the presence of the unspeakable Umar, the sorcerous sister of the dread Dormammu. Imprisoned by her brother for unknown eons, she escaped the spells that held her after Dormammu's seeming demise in STRANGE TALES #146. Returning to the Dark Dimension, she took the throne she had coveted for so long. She soon discovered Dr. Strange's role in Dormammu's death and set out to destroy the magician, knowing that she could never be secure while Strange lived. There followed one of the greatest magical battles in Marveldom (STRANGE TALES #150-#156), which ended, not by Dr. Strange's superior power (he didn't have it), but by the appearance of the horrible Zom, whose power even Umar feared. She fled back to the Dark Dimension.

Dormammu was being quite sensible when he imprisoned his treacherous sister in the "void between the worlds." Umar herself admitted her designs "...still am I a female--! Thus, I shall crush (Strange) as only a woman can -- with the matchless weapons of cunning -- and overwhelming guile!" In her next appearance (DR. STRANGE #172-173) she pretended to be faithful to her brother (who had returned), while all the time planning to overthrow him. She did not find her chance then, but she was willing to wait. She returned again at her brother's side (DR. STRANGE #6-9, G-S AVENGERS #4), and this time she did manage to trick him, thus gaining his powers. Dr. Strange (with the help of Clea) defeated her only by restoring Dormammu's p power to him. He then defeated Umar, and was in turn defeated by the Earth Goddess.

Umar's magical might is probably very close to Dormammu's, in terms of strength. Her weakness, however, lies in the fact that she has a human body. (Note: In her STRANGE TALES appearances, her head was aflame, like Dormammu's. When she next showed up, the flames were gone, whether by some enchantment or editorial oversight).

But the most interesting thing about Umar is her connection with Clea. It was revealed in her most recent appearance (DR. STRANGE #9) that Clea was the offspring of Umar and Orini (the chief of Dormammu's slaves. Despising her human weakness, Umar refused to acknowledge the child's existence. Clea grew up never knowing who her mother was (and she still doesn't know). Evidence shows that Umar was out to kill Clea long before her identity was revealed. During her first appearance she seemed to know Clea and made repeated efforts to kill her. We thought that this was her way of striking at Dr. Strange, but now we know the real reason. She wished to kill her daughter, thus eliminating the evidence of her human weakness.

CHFC Comics Awards

Supergirl *Red Sonja* *Valkyrie* *Wonder Woman* *Black Canary* *Medusa*

BEST NEW HEROINE OF 1975

WINNER: Storm *(X-Men)*.....47.2%
Second: Powergirl *(All-Star)*...36.0%
Third: Pretty Pyra *(Kamandi)*..20.0%
Fourth: Hellcat *(The Avengers)*..9.6%
Fifth: Gamora *(Warlock)*.....8.8%
Sixth: Tara *(Warlord)*.....8.0%

FAVORITE COMICS HEROINE

WINNER: Wonder Woman 46.7%
Second: Red Sonja.....39.2%
Third: Black Canary 28.3%
Fourth: Supergirl.....24.2%
Fifth: Medusa.....20.0%
Sixth: Valkyrie.....18.3%

ANALYSIS: *The per cents listed are based on the ratio of the voting points each heroine actually received to the maximum number of points she could have received (if every voter had made her his first choice). (5 points were awarded for each voter's first choice, 3 for his second choice, and one for his third choice.) This is a new method for calculating per cents, and one which we feel gives a truer indication of each candidate's relative support by the CHFC voters.*

Wonder Woman seems to be a fairly clearcut choice as the favorite comics heroine of the CHFC, a rather pretigious status since the CHFC is the de facto official voice of the nation's - and in effect, the world's - comics heroines fans! (Yes, some of our overseas members did take part in the voting.) Mr. Schwartz, you're entitled to take a bow if not actually to demand a raise. Red Sonja's great popularity is also apparent, however, and this is especially significant since she is a relative newcomer to the comics.

Since the new-heroine voting was on an open basis with no nominees having been previously chosen, Storm's surprisingly high 47.2% is extremely impressive, as is, in fact, Power Girl's runner-up 36.0%.